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ABSTRACT

Dialogical drama with puppets is a specific method of revealing basic cultural values for preschool children. For this study, an interactive performance of a puppet show for young children was videotaped, along with a later performance of the same show by the children. The study compared the techniques used by the adult performers and the children and the similarities and differences in the fairy tale plot between the adults' and children's performances. The study also attempted to clarify the possibilities for children's creative expression in this type of activity. Episodes of the adults' and children's presentations were compared regarding composition, texts, addressees, and means of expression. Analysis indicated that the puppet show performed by the children was not a repetition but an independent creative activity that helped the children to shape the process of their own understanding and to discover sense hidden in the fairy tale; sensitive and skillful adult participation seemed key to the quality of the children's creative learning experience. (Contains 10 references.) (EV)

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Dialogical Drama with Puppets and Children's Creation of Sense

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Abstract

We can suppose on the basis of Vygotskian cultural historical theory that learning of cultural sense and values is not possible without specific dialogic forms of communication. Dialogical drama with puppets is a specific method of revealing basic cultural values for children in pre-school age. The method is discussed and analyzed in three stages:

1. Planning stage: the selection of narrative materials (folk tales) and selection of tools for constructing dialogues with the children during the presentation;

2. Drama presentation with puppets: dialogue between the puppets is celibrated according to children's reaction and an "open stage" encourage children to communicate with the puppets in dialogue;

3. Children's own presentation of the story with their own puppets: adult-child dialogue creates the setting for children's sense loaded reinterpretation of the story. The trajectory of dialogical construction of sense is illuminated with empirical materials.

Introduction

The first ideas on the Dialogical Drama with Puppets (DDP) method were born at a professional puppet theatre for children, and while observing communication between the actors and children. The behavior of the children, who were enjoying the performance, demonstrated their immense desire (though, very rarely realized at the theatre) to participate in the process on the stage in one way or another: some children would very much have liked to ask questions about what was going on, to comment loudly; the others – to come closer, to touch; some children got tired quickly, then were not able to follow all the events on the stage; the others wanted to get on the stage themselves (to dance or play music); some simply got frightened about something, started crying, etc. Communication in the theatre is collective, where 50 or more spectators come together, and there is no possibility to satisfy individual needs of every single child. The child is often subdued or he is expected to demonstrate

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behavior not typical of him. And if there is no adult, who fulfills the needs of a child of this age, a visit to the theatre can hardly bring about a lot of positive emotions in the child (we are talking about 2-4 -years olds). In spite of all the positive and valuable experience that the child acquires during visits to the theatre, especially artistic experience, the lack of personal attitude, absence of dialogue with the child and ignoring of the child as an active participant the educational effect of the theater remains marginal.

Therefore, we may say that the father of the Soviet puppet theater Obrazcov was right, when he recommended arranging children's visits to the puppet theater not earlier than at the age of 5. He recommended that 4 year olds should be accompanied by adults and taken only to special performances for small children in a smaller auditorium. Also the age of the children to whom the performance is intended, should be indicated on the tickets, programs and announcements.

When I got acquainted with the "theater practice" in the kindergarten, I observed a very similar situation. When a puppet performance is arranged in a kindergarten, it resembles one in a professional theater. A play is chosen, dramatized, puppets are produced (which takes time), teachers learn the texts, the play is rehearsed with puppets, and finally, when everything is ready, children are taken into an auditorium, seated and instructed to behave like in a real theatre – to stay quiet and be attentive.

Even in those cases, where children take part in the performance, the situation is very similar: children also learn the text, learn how to make the puppets move, rehearse, and the performance is shown after all serious preparations have been made.

This procedure is somewhat simpler, when the play is performed in a classroom, but even these are most often "copies" of professional theater performances. The above practice dominated Lithuania's pre-school institutions and professional theaters, puppet and drama, 10 years ago and it made way for the method of dialogical drama with puppets.

Theoretical basis for the method

The basis for creating the method were L. Vygotsky's thoughts on children's creativity in general and theatrical creativity in particular (1997), as well as his thoughts further developed by D. Elkonin on the social nature of child's play (1978).

Vygotsky noticed, that already in the early childhood vivid creative processes can be observed, and they can best be observed in play. He also distinguished theatrical creativity,

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which at the pre-school age is best represented in role-play and, together with narrative, is the most popular form of creativity. According to Vygotsky, this is so because of two main reasons, i.e. – the basis for children's acting is action, carried out by the child, effectively and directly connecting his/her personal experiences and artistic work. The second reason is the fact that rendering life experiences in the form of acting, lies in the very nature of the child, and it manifests itself spontaneously and absolutely independently of adults' wishes. The child seeks to embody his impressions and fantasies in images and actions.

R. Steiner and his followers (Childs, 1995; Thompson, 1994) stressed the educational character of fairytales. That is why plenty of time is devoted to telling and acting fairytales in Waldorf kindergartens and schools.

Gardner's Multiple Intelligences theory (1983) grounded and strengthened the attitude, that while working with children, especially different aged children, also having in mind different learning styles in the classroom, it is very important to *use a wealth of different means and communicate in a multitude of ways*. In other words, it is necessary to communicate with children using all possible symbolic means and forms of artistic "languages". Here theatrical means are kept in mind, when the meaning of the plot is conveyed not only verbally, but also with the help of the images, sounds, gestures, mimics and actions of the characters.

Even if you could create ideal conditions in the theater, the child could not participate in a dialogue with the characters of the play – puppets or actors – as with equal partners. He can only be a more or less active spectator. But the child's nature is different: according to Lotman, children value all artistic texts and objects as partners in their play – "they shout, touch, they do not look at the picture, but turn it about, poke their fingers, speak to the people in the picture, try to take part in the play, give commands to the actors, hit the book or kiss it" (1999, 57). Lotman stresses the basic difference between a doll as a toy and a doll as a model (a sculpture). The difference lies in the fact, that both of these cultural phenomena are addressed to different audiences.

The model - doll (sculpture) – adult audience is apt to watch, the active part in this case being the author, the creator of the statue. The very statue is just a go-between / mediator, conveying somebody else's creation.

In the case of the toy - doll, *children's audience* reacts to it as a *participant of a play* – in this case the information is created during the play. The doll is a sort of stimulator, who

encourages acting and embodying new traits to yourself. To be a participant means to participate in the imitative events "from the inside", not to reflect on them while you are observing from the outside.

Bachtin's (1999) ideas about dialogic and polyphonic nature of human consciousness and thinking processes predetermined the formation of the main principles of Dialogical Drama with Puppets method; all the rest was prompted by practical experience and pedagogical intuition.

Giving a performance in the theatre and in the kindergarten classroom has to have *different goals*, whose definitions are very important. The main goal is, of course, the same but totally different conditions for communication both in the theatre and the kindergarten classroom, as well as different professional competences determine the different means of influence, educational areas and possibilities.

A kindergarten teacher is concerned about the development of the whole child personality, and, being with the child day after day, and knowing him/her very well, the teacher has a possibility not only to observe the child's development, but influence it as well.

In the theatre a more general personality development takes place, it can't be individualized as much; besides more attention is traditionally paid to artistic and moral development, which requires certain preparation from the child, i.e. the child has to familiarize theatrical language, to acquire certain artistic experience. This sort of "preparation" should take place in the kindergarten, where every child individually masters all possible forms and "languages" of artistic expression.

And the child does this every day, while he/she pretends, acts and produces fairytales, draws, models, makes music, dances and improvises. Later, when the child comes to the theatre, he observes in a way a complete outcome of such experimentation, which addresses the child in a language that he/she already knows and stimulates the development of the child's artistic expression.

That is why it is vitally important to create, in a kindergarten classroom, conditions for the child to go through the newly acquired theater experience and to internalize this experience, which usually happens during children's everyday play.

Thus, theater education in the kindergarten and in the theater should be intertwined and continued in the all-round developmental work.

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To make an impact on the situation, a traveling "Theatre in a Doorway" was founded, and it performed fairytales in kindergarten groups for several years.

While visiting kindergartens (during university students' practice), we performed fairytales with puppets. We aimed at situations, which would allow children to participate in the performance, to fulfill their needs: letting them touch a character or decorations, encouraging them to ask questions, giving them an opportunity to express their opinion, allowing them to watch the performance from a distance or very close or not to watch at all.

In 1991 all performances of one particular fairytale were videoed during a month. In the following an investigation of the video material will be presented. The different stages of the Dialogical Drama with Puppets (DDP) method application in practice are recorded on videotape.

The video recording was made in one of Vilnius' nursery – kindergartens in the classroom of different aged children. The ages were from 2 to 7. The classroom was visited four times. The analyses have been made of the material where the fairytale was performed with puppets by the experimenters (55 minutes). The children performed the same fairytale a week later (33 minutes).

The research aims were:

1. To study the techniques used by the experimenters and means of influencing of these techniques;
2. To study the techniques used by the experimenters and the children during the children's performance.

Later to compare:

3. The techniques used by the teacher and the child;
4. The similarities and differences in the fairytale plot, as told by the children and the teacher, trying to identify the nature of these similarities and differences;

Try to clarify:

5. Whether there are any and what possibilities for children's creative expression in this kind of activities;

Description of the course of the investigation

The first visit in the group took place on Oct. 30, 1991. The main purpose of the visit was to get acquainted with the children, with the classroom surroundings, with the teachers and

discuss further visits. When the children learned that we would like to perform a fairytale "The Liar Goat", they all joyfully accepted the proposal.

The second visit took place on Nov. 6. During this visit the fairytale was performed with puppets followed by talks and communication with the children.

The third visit took place on Nov.14. The children themselves had been getting ready for this visit. They performed the same "The Liar Goat", with puppets. The production was theirs.

The fourth visit took place on Dec. 13. During this visit the children were divided into small groups, and they made two big pictures on the subject of the fairytale they had watched and performed.

The activities of the children and teachers during the second, third and fourth visits were recorded on videotape.

Thorough preparations were made before performing the fairytale to the children.

The preparation was carried out on five stages:

1. Selection of a fairytale
2. Preparation for the staging
3. Search for artistic solution and realization
4. Selection of music and songs
5. Rehearsal.

Looking for a possible fairytale, the decision to choose "The Liar Goat" was an easy one for two main reasons: the fairytale is known to most children and popular among teachers. The reason is probably that lying as a theme is encountered practically by every child and adult. Besides the numerous variants in folklore, there are a number of fairytales by different authors based on this fairytale. That is why many children have heard more than one or two interpretations of this fairytale. The same is true with the other fairytale "The Goat and the Goat lings", which was also used in the dramatization. In summary we can say, that the lie - theme and the popularity of the plots in both the fairytales determined the choice.

Writing the dramatization, the children's wish to follow the fate of the characters after the performance, or after the fairytale has been told, was born in mind. What is going to happen next? As an answer to such a question, the plot of "The Goat and the Goat lings" was used as a continuation to the fairytale "The Liar Goat", which proved to be one more lesson in the poor Goat's life. A lesson, which made the Goat think about her behavior and return to the

Old Man and the Old Woman – to the place where she could feel safe and cozy, where she could be most useful and needed.

Knowing children's ability to identify themselves with the characters and their suffering in a fairytale told or performed, described by Zaporozec (1986), the emphasis was consciously put on the episodes, where the characters had to choose between moral and immoral behavior, revealing motives for their choice, their feelings and doubts. Also, joining the two plots together aimed at revealing the development of the personality of the main character – the Goat – from a stubborn liar to a goat that reflects on her behavior, evaluates possible consequences and consciously changes her ways.

Writing the scenario, attention was paid to language, with the purpose of maintaining the authentic texts of the folk fairytale and trying to demonstrate how every character's manner of speaking reveals the character as well as to expose differences. Bearing in mind the spectators' age (from 2 to 7), it was very important to make the dialogues short and clear, to make the words correspond with the actions, to keep balance between text and action.

The artistic decisions in mind, the following was aimed at:

- The performance had to be very compact and easy to transport (that is why the main decoration was a big woven basket, which occasionally became the old Man's house or the Rabbit's Cottage, where all the dolls and the other props could easily be placed).
- It should be possible to perform the fairytale in a smaller or bigger room, as well as outside.
- The production of the puppets and all the decorations should be easy and quick produced from simple, very cheap and natural material (the puppets were made of wood, hay and straw).

Three well-known Lithuanian folk songs were used in the performance, with slight alterations in the texts.

A basket was used for decoration, the puppets were made of wood, hay, straw, and they were dressed in pieces of linen and cotton.

The performance was rehearsed for three days, approximately 4 hours a day. This phase was the most difficult and time consuming, because every single episode, every scene was rehearsed separately, choosing the best from several variants, correcting the text, considering all the possible reactions by the children, reconsidering place and ways of their participation.

The final performance took 28 minutes. The preparation for the performance took one month in all, and later, it took the teachers who participated in the experiment approximately 1-3 days, to get ready for performances.

Experimenters' presentation

In the following the acting of the experimenters in the classroom will be described in detail.

During the second visit "The Liar Goat" was told and performed with puppets to the children. The duration of the performance was 55 minutes, it was seen by 19 children and 2 teachers.

The main purpose of the performance was to do it in an improvised form of *a play – dialogue*. The fairytale chosen was well - known to the children, the performance was going on leisurely, bearing in mind the tempo of children's perception and reactions. The children's questions were answered; comments listened to, probing their reasoning skills. The children had a possibility to see the characters from a distance and close by, even to touch them, because the actors were walking among the children, who sat on the floor; or the children could move closer and watch from there, whenever they felt like it. From time to time all the children were involved into the performance and every child had a possibility to take a certain role and directly communicate with the characters. The children were not obliged to watch the show – they could choose another activity, stand up any time, go away and return when they wanted. Indeed, the smaller ones stood up several times and walked over fetch a toy, to have a drink or do something else, but it never took 5 minutes before they were back watching the performance. All the children moved about during the show: they approached the small bench, where the main action took place, observed from different angles, then returned to the carpet and settled themselves down on their belly. When children were participants of the performance proper (becoming market salesmen, grass, or water), they all chose a place they liked and a way to act. The children were attentive and interested, took actively part in the course of the events even though the performance was quite long.

A lot of planning and rehearsing had preceded the performance, which represented improvised play - dialogue; however, the final outcome differed greatly from the original version. The duration of the play from 28 minutes to 55 with the children joining in the play indicated that many changes were made during the performance.

The form of the fairytale presentation was determined by several important goals:

1. The children's interest in and understanding of the performance had to be confirmed.

2. The children were not only supposed to watch the performance, but to take active part in it themselves.
3. The children had to have a chance to join in the action, not only according to the experimenter's plan, but also when they naturally felt like it.

Thus, during the performance changes could take place in the course of the events, as well as in the anticipated ideological and semantic accents. These are the main advantages of the method, allowing children to influence and change the performance significantly. In addition a common "field of meanings" is being created (Выготский, Эльконин, 1978) in the course of the performance, where the children and adults operate with ideas that are available to and understood by both parties.

The fact that adults' predetermined ideas are not thrust on the children is beneficial, on the other hand it's an advantage to adults, that they have a possibility to clarify up children's true attitude towards any problems (e.g., lie), and they can together with the children look for a reasonable solution.

In the course of the performance "The Liar Goat" the children asked questions, made comments and expressed (not always directly) their own opinions on foolishness, lies, cowardliness, justice. For example, one of the children noted, that most people lie and someone in the audience replied to him: " sometimes it's worth it."

This and other examples clearly demonstrate that pre-school children realize that behavioral and moral norms are not always monosemantic.

In order to define the DDP method more accurately we will discuss in detail the techniques used by the experimenters in acting the fairytale.

The performance starts with a conversation with the children, instead of the traditional way to begin a fairytale: "Once upon a time…"

During the quite long presentation (1 min.), one of the experimenters explains to the children, what is going to happen and tries to find out if the children have heard the fairytale before.

Episode 1

The experimenter: Today Ieva and I are going to tell you a fairytale about a goat. It is called: "A Fairytale about a Goat". Have you heard the fairytale, before?"

The children are then asked if they remember what happened in the fairytale:

The experimenter: Have you heard about the goat?

What happens in the fairytale? Do you remember?

Children: The naughty Goat tells lies.

It is agreed that the children will support the telling of the fairytale:

The experimenter: Children, you will help me to tell this fairytale. A deal?

Children: A deal.

Everybody listens to a melody, played by flute, and the performance starts.

The experimenter: *(putting basket on the bench)* what's this?

Children: A house.

The experimenter: A house, of course, a house. Well, Ieva, let's begin.

The experimenter (I): Once upon a time (...)

And the telling of the story starts constantly interrupted by different questions and making sure the children can follow and understand the course of events. According to Wertsch (Верч, 1996), teacher is constantly "probing the field". In turn, the children, who have understood the rules of the play, make questions themselves and give comments. The experimenters react to the children's comments. The performance is with questions, answers and comments from one side and another.

The experimenters use different means of expression presenting the fairytale:

- The fairytale is being told;
- The language used is picturesque and expressive;
- The actors' expressive facial mimics and movements accompany the story telling;
- The puppets' movements accompany the words.

Here is a concrete episode from the fairytale dramatization, where the Old Man is happily returning home with a newly purchased Goat.

Episode 2

Note: in this scene the experimenter acts for both characters - the Goat and the Old Man and simultaneously plays the narrator's role.

The Old Man: What a beauty (!) What a Goat! She is so beautiful, isn't she, children (?)

The Goat: Meee, meee…

The Old Man: How slim her legs are (!) Turn around, my Goatee, show your pretty legs. And how slender she is (!) How sharp her horns are (!) How nice her ears and how big her eyes (!) Look, children what a Goat. My old Woman will be so happy (!) Won't she (?) What do you think children (?)

Children: She will.

The Old Man: She will say, good for you, my Old Man, you bought such a Goat! Well, Goatee, let's go home.

The narrator: The Old Man takes the Goat and leads her home. Walking by her side he can't take his eyes from her. What a beauty (!) The Old Man journeys joyfully. Journeys and sings.

The Old man: (*starts singing jumping to the Goat's side*). You're my Goatee; you're my poor thing, how beautiful you are. *(Jumping to the other side)* You, my Goatee, you're my poor thing, how pretty you are.

The narrator: The Old Man jumps to the other side of the Goat and starts to sing again.

The Old Man: (*singing*) you're my little Goatee, how soft you are (*after finishing the song, he kisses the Goat*).

The narrator: The Old Man kissed her (!)

The Old Man: You're my Goat, poor little thing… what else could I say to my Goat, something kind (?) Oh, I don't know. In short, a pretty Goat (!)

The narrator: The Old Man picked up the Goat in his arms and carries her – such a joy (!) (*The children laugh*). They journey home, don't they (?) They walk, and walk, and walk, and here at last is the cottage.

The Old Man expresses his admiration to the Goat in such **words**:

The Old Man: What a beauty, what a Goat!

How slim her legs are! Turn around, my Goat show your pretty legs. And how slender she is! How sharp her horns! How nice her ears and how big her eyes!

The Old Man is so happy, that he can't help **singing:**

> You're my Goat, poor little thing, how beautiful you are,
> You're my Goat, poor little thing, how pretty you are,
> You're my Goat, poor little thing, how soft you are.

His words are accompanied by **actions: w**hile singing, he jumps to one side of the Goat, and then to the other; having finished singing, he kisses the Goat; then takes her into his arms and carries home.

The experimenter, who covers all the roles in this scene, with his **facial expressions** (surprise, short laugh, winking of his eye) tries to involve the children in the action. Also, in the narrator's words he **constantly comments** on the Old Man's words and actions:

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The narrator: the Old Man takes the Goat and leads her home. Leads her home and can't take his eyes from her. What a beauty! The Old Man journeys home very pleased. Journeys and sings a song.

The narrator: The Old Man jumps to one side of the Goat, then to the other and starts to sing again.

The narrator: The Old Man kissed her.

The narrator: The Old Man took the Goat into his arms and carries her happily! (*The children laugh*).

Arousing the children's reactions the experimenter/narrator **directly talks** to the children asking if they see what is happening; if they notice the Old Man's joy; at the same time he is trying to check if the children are able to follow the story or if they understand what is going on:

The narrator: What a beautiful Goat, isn't she, children?

Look, children, what a Goat. My Old Woman will be very happy. What do you think, children, will she?

The experimenters, acting the fairytale, try to reveal and illustrate the character's feelings and thoughts not only in words, but facial mimics, gestures and actions as well. This all is done on purpose, seeking to help the children identify themselves in the characters, thus becoming active participants in the fairytale. Here in primarily the inner of the child, his mental activeness is born in mind, when he identifies himself not only with the external actions of the characters, but also with their internal experiences. As the child simultaneously watches the actors' facial mimics, gestures etc. he learns to "read" the language of theatrical symbols. Later, when the children act the fairytale on their own, they gradually learn to master the language themselves.

Children's performance

During the third visit, which took place one week after the experimenter's performance, the children performed "The Fairytale about a Goat" with the puppets they had made. Eight children acted the fairytale, all the others and three teachers were spectators. The performance was not rehearsed in full, but during free play and in small groups they had tried to act separate episodes. With the teachers' help they made very simple puppets and decorated the "stage". Two tables were pushed together, and baskets as well as different kinds of natural material were used to arrange the Old man's and the Rabbit's houses, and the forest.

The experimenter was sitting among the spectators, but during the course of the performance he constantly communicated both with the "actors" and with the "spectators", so that there

were no breaks in the performance. His help was needed in the very beginning of the performance, when the actors, after the introductory flute melody, seemed rather lost. The experimenter started asking questions.

Episode 3

The experimenter: Well, children, what fairytale are you going to tell us today? What fairytale? What is it called (?) Is it about a mosquito, perhaps (?)

Children: (*laugh merrily and shout the answer*): No, it's a story about the Liar Goat (!)

The Experimenter: (*with interest*): The Liar Goat (?) You are acquainted with such a Goat (?) Aren't you (?)

Children: (*shouting*): Yes (!)

The experimenter: (*addressing children – spectators*): Do you know such a Goat (?)

Children (*shouting*): Yes (!)

The experimenter: Well well..., is here one Goat like that or more (?)

Children (all): Many (!)

The experimenter: Hey, what is happening (?) It is necessary to tell fairytales about lying goats (!) Well, begin the story (!)

This 35-second conversation is not enough to start the performance. The girl, who is a narrator, speaks very silently and shyly. The other "actors" squatting on the floor barely move.

Episode 4

The narrator (one of the children): There once lived an Old Man an Old Woman and Little Annie.

The experimenter: (*watching the puppets while they move*): Where is this Old man (?) The Old Man walks around.

Hey, show them (*the children lift up their puppets on the table and start to move them more*). Look, how the Old Man walks (!) And now the Old Woman – how does she walk (?) And what about Annie (?) Annie is walking and singing a song, isn't she (?) How does Annie sing, let's think (!) How does Annie? (*the experimenter starts humming a tune silently*). La la la, can Annie sing like that (?)

Look, the Old Man walks so beautifully and does all kinds of things. How does the Old Man sing (?) Hm (?) Maybe, like this – to to to num num num... Does the Old Man sing like this, what do you think (?)

After every comment or question the actors - the children start to move the puppets more rigorously and purposefully, the singing makes them happy and more relaxed, and little by little they take the initiative in their hands. The experimenter asks what the characters of the fairytale do, and the children demonstrate it with the puppets.

Later the experimenter suggests a theme for conversation, and even suggests what the

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characters should say; in the beginning the children just repeat the suggested text, but after the Old Man starts talking, the other characters are hardly able to answer. And the children do it all independently. In five minutes the children act the fairytale on their own, even though the experimenter interferes with questions every now and then, makes comments, with the purpose of keeping up the dialogue between the acting children and helping to conduct a dialogue with the spectators and even with the actors, or rather, with the character. As can be seen from the episode 1 in the beginning, the experimenter encourages the acting children and prompts them as well as the spectators on what the character does. But this should be done very carefully, with a very close attention watching to the children's performance. Help should be offered only in the case a child is really lost and does not know what to do next.

Comparison of the Fairytales acted by the experimenters and children

The fairytale acted by the experimenters:	The fairytale acted by the children:
Duration: 55 minutes	Duration: 33 minutes
Actors – 2 experimenters	Actors – 8
Spectators – 19 children, 2 teachers	Spectators – 9 children, 3 teachers, and one experimenter
The fairytale consists of 31 events/episodes	The fairytale consists of 30 events/episodes

We shall now compare and discuss the course of events presented by the experimenters and the children

The course of events

The fairytale acted by the experimenters:	The fairytale acted by the children:
• The Old Man and the Old Woman purchased the Goat	• The Old Man and the Old Woman decide to purchase a Goat
	• The Old Man goes to the market
	• The Old Man purchases the Goat
• The Old Man happily takes the Goat to his house	• The Old Man takes the Goat home
• Annie goes to shepherd the Goat	• Annie doesn't want to shepherd the Goat, but does so after an order by the Old man

- The first lie of the Goat
- The Old Man sends Annie off to the forest

- The Old Woman goes to shepherd the Goat
- The Old Woman reluctantly goes to shepherd the Goat

- The second lie of the Goat
- The Old Man sends the Old Woman off
- The Old Man goes to shepherd the Goat
- The third lie of the Goat

- The Old Man gets ready to slaughter the Goat, but she doesn't wait and runs away
- The Old Man sends the Goat off to the forest
- The Old Man sets out to look for Annie and the Old Woman

- The Goat settles in the Rabbit's house
- The Old Man finds Annie and the Old Woman and brings them home
- The Rabbit returns back and finds his house occupied

- The world's bravest Fox tries to help, but the Goat runs away
- The Bear takes measures to drive the Goat out, but runs away frightened
- The brave Wolf comes to rescue, but runs away frightened
- The Bear gets ready to drive the Goat out, but runs away frightened

- The Bee flies to the scene and drives the Goat out
- The Bees arrive flying and drive the Goat out
- The Goat builds a house in the forest and produces a Goat ling
- The Goat builds a house in the forest and produces Goat lings

- The Goat goes out into the forest to graze
- The Wolf comes to kidnap the Goat lings
- The Goat lings don't let him in
- The Blacksmith makes the Wolf's tongue thinner
- The Wolf cheats the Goat lings and kidnaps them
- The Goat comes home and doesn't find her little offspring
- The Goat's revenge
- The end of the Wolf
- The Goat returns to the Old Man and the Old Woman and apologizes
- The Old Man and the Old Woman allow the Goat to live with them

Comparing the succession of the main events in the performances, it is obvious, that there aren't many differences or they aren't important, this makes it possible to state that the

children were able to repeat the plot of the fairytale rather precisely, making just minor deviations from it. No doubt it is of significance that the fairytale is well - known to the children. They have also watched the experimenters acting the tale. Taking these things into consideration we can assure that it wasn't difficult for the children to act accordingly. But deeper analyses of the different interpretations of certain events indicate that there are quite a lot of things, which were not included in the fairytale performed by the experimenters.

For example, the scene, where the Old Man wakes Annie up and sends her to shepherd the Goat.

Episode 5

The Old man: Annie, Annie! Annie, get up and go shepherd the Goat, won't you (?)

Annie (*suddenly a girl, who has taken the Old Woman's role, starts to talk to Annie*): But, grandpa, I don't want to. Don't want to – I want to sleep.

The Old man: You will do what I say (!)

Annie (*the girl, who has the Old Woman's role, speaks to her*): No (!) //

The Old Man: // You promised me yesterday, and now you don't want to.

Annie (*the girl, who has the Old Woman's role, speaks to her*): Don't want to, I'm tired.

The Old Man: Well, you go quickly (!)

Annie (*the girl, who has the Old Woman's role, speaks to her*): I don't want to. //

Annie: (*now the girl, who is acting Annie's role, speaks*): // OK, I'm going.

A similar dialogue recurs, when the following morning the Old Woman has to shepherd the Goat.

Episode 6

The Old man: Hey, it's morning already! Goat (!) Now you will go, Old Woman! Old Woman, Old Woman, go and shepherd the Goat. Hurry up, what did I say (!)

The girl, who is playing the Old Woman, is stamping about with the puppet and shaking her head, thus demonstrating her unwillingness to go.

The Experimenter: Why won't you go to shepherd the Goat, Old Woman?

The Old Woman: I don't want to.

The Experimenter: Why don't you want to? //

The Old man: She's playing pranks, I would say. I told you to go and now you will (!)

The Old Woman: Let it be.

The Old Man: Today you should graze her very well, or else I would send you away (!)

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These scenes are very lively and expressive; the children are good at rendering the intonations, facial expressions and body movements of the characters.

The two episodes (5,6) illustrate Sawyer's (1997) statement, that 3 – 6 -year - old children's play is based on spontaneous improvisations. Though children perform a familiar fairytale, the impression you get is that they submit to an inner development of the performance, which is happening here and now, instead of sticking to the external succession of the events in the plot. In the original fairytale, as well as in the variant, performed by the experimenters, the scenes were different – neither Annie, nor the Old Woman contradict the Old Man's orders and went to shepherd the Goat without any excuses; this means that the scenes, which occurred in the children's performance, were truly original and born spontaneously, during the course of the play. The children's life experience is probably reflected in them, but indirectly. According to Vygotsky (1997), children's play is just an echo of what they have observed and heard in real life; while playing children never reproduce episodes from their life experience exactly as they happened in reality. Children seem to go further and create a new reality. It would not be prudent to state, that children while acting a fairytale, are directly inserting episodes from their lives. It would be more precise to say that, they, based on their own experiences, are trying to give proof of and explanation for the characters' behavior.

There are also differences in the scenes of the Goat's revenge, but these differences are of another kind.

Epizode 7

Children's performance		Experimenters' performance	
The Goat's Revenge			
Actor 1	Verbal and sound expression 2	Actor 3	Verbal and sound expression 4
1	2	3	4
Wolf:	Who's baking such tasty pancakes and spreading butter on them (?)	Wolf:	Goatees, my neighbor, give me with some porridge.
The Goat:	Mummy's baking pancakes, mummy's baking, and spreading butter, come pal, I'll give	Narrator:	The Wolf is asking a question, is he?
		The Goat:	I will not give you anything; you must

	some to you, too.		have taken my kids.
	Close your eyes and open your mouth.	The Wolf:	You can't say so, Goatee. I am so handsome, so orderly, and so polite. Children, is it possible, that I could eat her kids?
Narrator:	And she shoved a pan-full of hot pancakes down his throat.		
		Children:	You could, you could! Here they are – in the sack (!)
		The Wolf:	There is no sack here, and those children are liars (!)
			Hush up, you (!)
		Children:	We are not going to keep silent, no, no (!)
			Get out of this forest (!)//
		The Wolf:	
		Children:	//No (!)//
		The Wolf:	The forest is full of liars–children, what is going on (?)
			There is no place to live for polite animals like me (!)
		The Goat:	OK, get in, Wolfe, taste the porridge, help yourself (!)

The scene of the Goat's Revenge exists both in the children's and in the experimenters' performances, but in the children's variant the Goat bakes pancakes, whereas in the experimenters' she cooks porridge. In the children's performance the Goat offers the Wolf some pancakes, while in the experimenters' case – she only after long debate gives him some porridge to taste. The children "borrowed" this interpretation of the revenge scene from another well-known variant of the fairy-tale on the Liar Goat, which they heard from their teacher in the classroom. Also, they "borrowed" the Goat's song, which suited them better,

because it was more familiar and more frightening.

Episode 8

Song sung by the children:	Song sung by the experimenters:
It's me, the old Goat, half skinned, half scraped.	I am the poor Goat,
With hornets of gold,	Half skinned, half scraped.
With nails of silver.	My sharp horns,
Stamping with my leg,	My needle hairs,
Banging with my horn,	My timber legs,
Scratch – I will tear,	My brush tail.
All the guts I will shake out,	As I get out, I will butt,
And hang them out on the tree!	All the guts I will shake out!

From the succession of the events presented earlier and the scenes discussed it is obvious, that children, without changing the plot or the course of events, are quite free and creative in reproducing the events of the fairytale, giving their own interpretation – i. e., introducing details from their social experience, scenes and songs from other fairytales they already know or other variants of the same fairytale.

All the episodes of both experimenters' and children's' presentations were compared from the following points of view:

1. The similarities and differences in the composition, texts, addressee, means of expression in the fairytales performed by the children and the experimenters;
2. The manifestation of children's creativity, its occurrence in general and specifically.

Talking about the performances of the children and the experimenters alike it is important to bear in mind the main difference, which lies in the preparation of the performances.

The experimenters get ready for their performance quite thoroughly; they prepare the scenario, think over and prepare the puppets and decorations, prepare the songs and other musical insertions, rehearse the performance, plan spots for communication with the children and the ways to do it. Later, when they act for the children, they can't stick blindly to the rehearsed variant, but according to the children's reactions, comments and comprehension a slightly modified variant of the performance is presented, with lots of improvisation and elements of play.

Children get ready for the performance of the fairytale differently: together with the teacher

they make puppets, then arrange the scene, details of scenery and share the roles. The children do not rehearse the play that is why their performance is a *spontaneous improvisation* here and now.

Texts

It is obvious at a glance that there is less text in the children's performance. When children act, they talk very little; their dialogues are short and laconic.

The Old Man, while he was taking the Goat to the pasture, uttered only two sentences:

Goat, let's go (!)

Let's go, now, today I will be your shepherd you and he starts singing:

La la lalala…

While the Old Man is grazing the Goat, he keeps on singing and walking back and forth along the edge of the meadow. To the experimenter's question, if he wants to have a drink, he snaps promptly:

(5) No (!)

but immediately bends down to the child to get a sip of the imaginary water and starts to sing again.

Then without a word he returns to his yard with the Goat and starts to sing again:

(9) What did you eat, what did you drink (?)

When the Goat answers that she hasn't eaten anything, the Old Man loses his patience:

(11) What. Did you lie to me all the times (?)

and makes up his mind in one breathe:

(12) Go to the forest, quickly (!)

With these words the girl, who plays the Old Man's role, pushes the Goat – puppet down from the edge of the table, where the act is performed.

Usually the words the children pronounce are simultaneous to the actions they perform; sometimes the actions are carried out without a word.

In the analyzed episode where the experimenter says:

(8) The sun is setting down, is setting down. Drive home, Old Man//

the Goat and the Old Man head for home.

In the children's performance the events are being acted, not described by words. The children talk only when it is necessary for the character's actions to be clear to the friends who are also acting, or when the character has to announce or ask something significant. It can be said that

the *actions*, not the words, *play the most important part in the children's performance*.

In the experimenters' performance there is considerably more text. The texts in the children's performance, as well as in that of the experimenters, can be divided into 5 main groups:

1. Coinciding direct dialogues of the characters;
2. Non-coinciding direct dialogues of the characters;
3. Explanations of the characters, their actions; comments, conversations and discussions with the children;
4. The experimenter's direct communication with the character;
5. Regulation of the children's behavior.

The amount of the coinciding and non-coinciding direct dialogues of the characters differ only a little; during scenes, performed by the children, there are no dialogues regulating children's behavior. While in the children's play there are more sentences of the experimenter's direct communication with characters, but there are only few sentences explaining the characters' actions in the performance, and the discussions and conversations with the audience are almost non-existent. In the experimenters' performance most time is allowed to comments and conversations with the children.

Example 1

> The narrator: You know, the Old Man got tired, he was old, the sun shone, and he fell asleep, you see (?)
>
> The Goat ate, drank and drank and he toed happily to lie down in the sun to warm himself.
>
> The Old Man wakes up and sees – hey – the sun has set (!)

While acting, the experimenters constantly keep commenting on the course of events in the fairytale, the actions of the characters, and asking every now and then what the spectators think, inviting them to participate in the process.

Example 2

> The narrator: Well, they are coming home, and what does the Old Man do, do you remember (?)
>
> The children (*answer*): Asks again.
>
> The narrator: The Old Man stands in front of the Goat and asks.
>
> What does the Old Man ask (?) Let's ask together.

Comparing different episodes, it is obvious that in the experimenters' performance special attention is paid to such comments, explanations that help to reveal the characters' feelings

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and thoughts, and the motives for their behavior. Conversations with the children help focus the spectators' attention, arouse their interest, allow to clarify their opinions and points of view, correct the tempo of the performance and put stress on the main points. They can even change the course of events. The children become real participants in the performance and every child becomes involved in the process of playing the fairytale.

In the children's performance there are no dialogue with the spectators; all the comments and explanations of the characters' actions are given on the initiative of the experimenters, not the children.

Addressee

It is quite obvious that the children acting the fairytale, in spite of their intentions do not perform the fairytale to the spectators. Rather often, and especially when they get very much involved, they start to act for *themselves* and are not much concerned about to what extent their actions or words are clear to the spectators.

The child wants his acting friends to understand his role, and he directs his words and actions to the friends. This can well be seen, when during the performance the actors often stand around the table so, that the-scenery and the characters are not visible to the spectators. This is related to the child – spectators' behavior, when they cannot see and hear what is being performed, gather round the table obstructing the view to other children. That is why the experimenters during the children's performance frequently ask the actors to speak louder and stand at the table in a way that makes it visible for the others to see what is happening.

Epizode 9

The experimenter: *Stand, you Little Rabbit, stand here, in the Bear's place, so that we all can see.*

Annie, come here, sit down, Annie, because, you know, we cannot see anything. Let's sit down.

...The Rabbit is happily returning home from the forest and...

please, speak louder, Ieva, because I can't heer you

Most of the children are momentarily more involved in playing the fairytale to other actors or to the audience. Only one girl, who had the Old Man's role, played to the partners and to the spectators simultaneously. She speaks loudly and emphatically, stands with her face turned to the audience, always observes their reactions, sometimes she even reminds the other children of what they should do. During the whole performance she is the most active participant in their play and seems to be leading the course of the fairytale. She is not only successful at

creating the character of the Old Man, which she has chosen, but is also able to demonstrate that character to the others. She seems to have mastered best of all the skills of representing the Old Man, she is able to convey the character's emotions, feelings and moods using both verbal and non-verbal means of communication. The others are not as successful during performance as a whole, but in separate episodes they manage quite well. But this fact allows us to draw the conclusion that their presentation skills are just starting to develop, because now and again they start acting more to themselves or their partners than the audience. It is possible to say that the girl in the Old Man's role has mastered the different elements in acting technology, which the experimenters also use in their performance.

Discussion of the results of the study

Imitation or creative interpretation?

It is a generally accepted fact that children constantly imitate adults' behavior. The influence of imitation on children's play is indisputable. But it is very important to understand the specific character of these imitations.

As mentioned before, it seems that it did not cause much difficulty for the children to repeat the plot of a well-known fairytale without significant deviations. Vygotsky (1997) states that child's play is a creative "reproduction" of past experiences, combining and creating new reality, which corresponds with the child's needs and inclinations.

Where can children's creativity be found in the present case, if any exists?

Comparing the children's and the experimenters' performances, we observe that children use a lot of elements from the experimenters' play; they also use separate episodes from another variant of the same story, and they include scenes from real life. This means that the children create *their own original variant* of the fairytale they know and like.

A close scrutiny of the texts of both the performances makes it possible to state that there is no real repetition, only some similar lines of thought followed sometimes by almost identical texts. Even in these cases there are highly creative interpretations, in e.g. the following episode (10).

Episode 10

Children's performance:	Experimenter's performance:
The Old man (Child 1): (14) What shall I do now I don't know.	The Old man: But what shall I do now, poor old man (?) Lonely as a finger. Turned out my child

Shall I live alone, as a rotten apple-tree (?)
Well, I'll go to look for the Old Woman and Annie.
(*singing*) La la lalala, la la la la la la...

from the house and the Old Woman.
Here stands the empty house.
(*addressing the children*) Well, little children, what shall I do now (?)
The children: Go and find them.
The Old Man: You are telling the truth, I shall go and bring back the Old Woman and Annie, they should not be very far.
The narrator: And the Old Man headed for the forest to look for the Old Woman and Annie.

After a careful analysis of the whole text in the children's performance and the description of their actions, it became obvious, that all the *events are very clearly and logically related.* It seems that the children understand the importance of the events for the development of the plot. The children act and talk only about those events they consider important, understandable and significant for the development of the plot.

It is obvious, that the children are able to comprehend and predict causal relationships of the events following each other. Their dialogues are exceptionally focused on defining these relations. When the children act, they combine one event to another, thus constructing the plot of the fairytale. The fairytale performed by the children reveals the understanding of the most important events in the play.

While reading texts of both the performances, you realize that in the sense of the main idea, composition of the fairytale performed by the children is in fact even *more effective*.

Bearing in mind all the aspects mentioned above, one can safely say that **the fairytale, performed by the children, is not a repetition, but quite an independent creative activity, which helps children to shape the process of their own understanding and to discover sense hidden in the fairytale**.

But all this happens because of adult's participation in an appropriate way and in appropriate moment during all the activities. It is clearly seen, that the **key** to the quality of children's creative and learning experiences is very **sensitive and skilful adult participation**.

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